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RHMFISS/HQ USAFRICOM STUTTGART GE PRIORITY
RUEATRS/DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC PRIORITY
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUEKDIA/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RHMFISS/HQ USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE PRIORITY
RUZEJAA/JAC MOLESWORTH RAF MOLESWORTH UK PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ABUJA 002331

SIPDIS

STATE FOR AF/W, INL/C, INL/AAE, AND INR

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/27/2018

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [KCOR](#) [KCRM](#) [NI](#)

SUBJECT: NIGERIA: RIBADU REITERATES THREAT AND NEED TO FLEE COUNTRY

REF: A. ABUJA 2325
[1](#)B. ABUJA 2307
[1](#)C. ABUJA 2249

Classified By: Ambassador Robin R. Sanders for reasons 1.4. (b & d).

[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY: In two late night conversations on November 27, former Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) Chair Nuhu Ribadu told the Ambassador that he felt he was in much greater danger than he did earlier in the week when he spoke with DCM (ref B). In response to a question from the Ambassador, he said he believes his harassment is being orchestrated by Attorney General Michael Aondoakaa and Inspector General of Police Mike Okiro and not from the Villa. Ribadu is planning to leave Nigeria within the next two days. Ambassador encouraged him to remain in touch and offered to use her good offices should he need help. We recommend that we allow Ribadu to maneuver himself quietly out of the country so as not to jeopardize his departure before further intervention. END SUMMARY.

[1](#)2. (C) Ribadu was much more concerned about his personal safety than he was a few days earlier. As he had before, Ribadu said that he is certain that a group from Benue State is trying to do him harm. He is no longer sleeping in his house in Abuja and instead "moves around during the course of the night." He interrupted his conversation with the Ambassador to go out and purchase another SIM card for his cell phone because he was sure his calls were being monitored.

[1](#)3. (C) When asked about his plans for his December 4 hearing in Kaduna (Ref A), Ribadu told the Ambassador that he would not/not attend and that he sent a letter explaining to the court that until the case on his demotion was decided, he had nothing more to add to his petition. (Note: The press reported on November 28 the court dismissed the hearing, and we are trying to verify this. End Note.) The Ambassador also asked Ribadu if he will report for duty to Bayelsa, to which he responded that he would not, as "things have changed."

[1](#)4. (C) In response to the Ambassador's question whether Ribadu thought the order to harm him from the highest levels of the GON (i.e., the President or those around him), Ribadu stated that at this time he did not/not believe that this was the case. Ribadu

told the Ambassador that he thought "individuals they had talked about before" (read, Attorney General Michael Aondoakaa and Inspector General of Police Mike Okiro) were responsible and noted that the five men following him were from Benue -- Aondoakaa and Okiro's state.

¶5. (C) Ambassador asked Ribadu what his next steps would be and when and how he planned to go the U.S., especially since it was likely his name was on a watchlist and he was likely to be prevented from departing because of his pending lawsuit against the Nigeria Police Force. Ribadu said he was planning to leave Nigeria within the next few days, but would not be departing through a &normal route such as via the airport as he too doubted he would be allowed to leave that way. He implied that he would not be traveling directly to the U.S. He noted earlier to the DCM that he planned to go first to the U.K., but he did not say this specifically to the Ambassador. (Comment: As a trained police officer, he may feel that he needs to make several stops in different places until he is out of reach of the individuals following him. End Comment). Ambassador encouraged Ribadu when and as prudent to let her know his situation and stressed that she did not want to do anything that might place him in jeopardy. He promised to keep in touch.

¶6. (C) COMMENT: The Ambassador will meet with FonMin on November 30 and will raise the issue of Ribadu's safety, pointing out that the GON is "shooting itself in the foot" with regard to its stance toward Ribadu as well as its over-reaction on press freedom issues, particularly given the FonMin's two speaking engagements in Washington and Atlanta.

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We recommend that we allow Ribadu to maneuver himself out of the country before taking additional action to protest the manner in which is being treated, in order not to jeopardize his departure. END COMMENT.

¶7. (C) This cable coordinated with Consulate Lagos.
Sanders